BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NM   News Release

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"PLANTING SEEDS OF DESPAIR" AT PARK

Hardy, VA - On the Burroughs Plantation, where Booker T. Washington was born and lived as a slave from 1856 through 1865, slave labor was relied upon to produce a profitable crop, ensuring the survival of the farm's inhabitants. Because soil conditions on this farm were marginally productive, growing desperately needed crops for food, clothing, and money was always an uncertainty. Crop successes and failures had a direct impact on people's lives. On the plantation, February was actually a time of seed planting activity for the cash crop of tobacco. It was just part of a nearly fifteen-month cycle of cultivation to produce a crop. What happened during the other months that required so many hands, hard work, skill, and attention to detail? Maybe you have stories to share from your experiences growing up and/or working in tobacco?

Join park ranger Timothy Sims for a walking tour of the Booker T. Washington National Monument historic area on Saturday, February 25, at 2:00 p.m. to answer these questions and to learn more about tobacco, slavery, and their influences on the people who lived on Piedmont Virginia small-slaveholding plantations in the 1850's.

 Booker T. Washington National Monument is one of 397 units of the National Park Service, the agency entrusted with the care of our nation's natural and cultural treasures. The park is located 16 miles northeast of Rocky Mount, VA via VA 122; 25 miles southeast of Roanoke, VA via U.S. 220 and VA 122; and 45 miles southwest of Lynchburg, VA via U.S. 460 and VA 122. The park is open seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission, parking, and all programs are free. Visit us on the web at: www.nps.gov/bowa.

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